

Message Text

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ACTION SCI-06

INFO OCT-01 NEA-11 ISO-00 IO-14 AID-20 CEQ-02 CIAE-00

COA-02 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-11 EPA-04 INR-10 L-03

NSF-04 NSC-10 NSAE-00 PM-07 RSC-01 SS-20 SPC-03

FEA-02 SAM-01 PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01 DRC-01 /153 W

----- 047138

R 151200Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9730

INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 2307

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SENV IN

SUBJECT: SECOND MEETING UNEP GOVERNING COUNCIL

REF: STATE 28193

1. CONTACTS WITH THE CANADIAN AND JAPANESE EMBASSIES, SUGGESTED
REFTEL, REVEAL THEY HAVE NO INSTRUCTIONS ON UNEP CONSULTATIONS, HAVE
NOT TALKED TO THE INDIANS ABOUT THE NAIROBI UNEP MEETING, AND HAVE
NO OBJECTION TO OUR DOING SO.

2. WE WILL REVIEW THE POINTS IN REFTEL WITH DR. VARSHNEY, SECRETARY
OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL AND COORDINATION,
AND ASHOK KHOSLA, THE COMMITTEE'S SCIENCE SPECIALIST. BOTH ARE NOW
OUT OF TOWN, BUT ARE EXPECTED BACK IN ABOUT A WEEK.

3. WE RECALL THAT DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO DELHI JOHN BUSTERUD OF
THE COUNCIL FOR ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY DISCUSSED IN SOME DETAIL WITH
VARSHNEY INDIA'S PARTICIPATION IN THE NAIROBI MEETING. VARSHNEY
AND KHOSLA SUBSEQUENTLY TOLD EMBASSY SCIENCE OFFICERS THAT
ONE OR BOTH OF THEM WOULD ATTEND THE MEETING.

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4. IT SEEMS TO US THAT GENERALLY IN INDIA EVEN LIMITED INTEREST AND LIP SERVICE TOWARD ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS HAVE SLACKENED SINCE THE STOCKHOLM CONFERENCE. A LOW PRIORITY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS IS EVIDENT IN THE FIFTH FIVE YEAR PLAN WHERE ENVIRONMENT (EXCEPT FOR WILDLIFE CONSERVATION) IS HARDLY MENTIONED. WHILE LARGEMLY A RESULT OF PREOCCUPATION WITH ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES, RECENT INDIAN INDIFFERENCE TO ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS IS IN PART DUE TO THE DEATH IN FEBRUARY 1973 OF PITABER PANT -- THE SPARK PLUG OF THE GOI ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM. ALL THIS WILL HAVE SOME EFFECT ON INDIA'S APPROACH TO UN ACTIVITIES. AS VARSHNEY TOLD US RECENTLY, INDIA IS MUCH MORE CONCERNED WITH THE DEVELOPMENTAL, THAN WITH THE PURELY ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS OF THE UN ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM.

SCHNEIDER

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